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Folk Tales Retold

Folk Tales Retold

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The Bruce Publishing Company

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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The Bruce Publishing Company
Printed in the United States of America

Table of Contents

	Page
The Five Pennies	7-21
The Five Little Red Caps	22-28
The Five Chinese Boys	29-36
The Little Blue Dishes	37-41
The Magic Curtain	42-46
The Little Snow-Girl	47-49
The Easter Rabbit	50-54
The Shoe-maker and the Elves	55-62
Hans and the North Wind	63-71
The Straw Ox	72-78
Hans and the Four Giants	79-90
Why the Bear Has a Stumpy Tail	91-93

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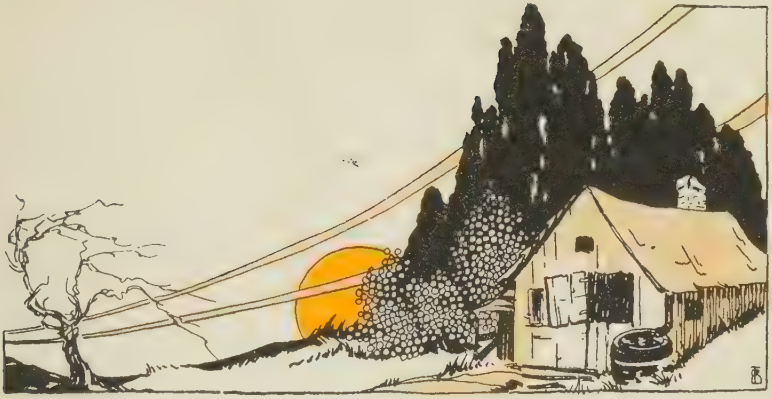
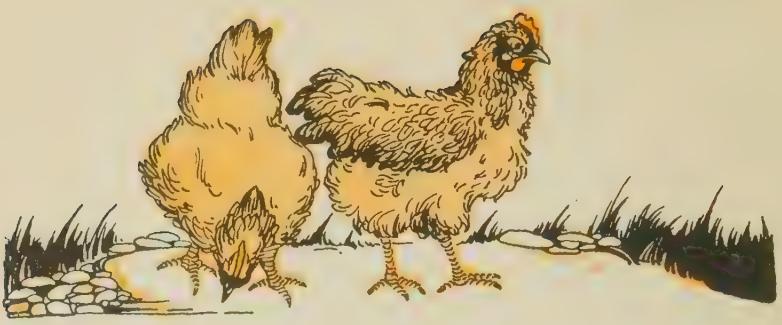
The boy started off with his few belongings in a pack thrown over his shoulder.



The Five Pennies

A long time ago a poor woodman lived with his son in a little house at the edge of the forest. Their house was small and somewhat out of repair, but they were thankful for it as it was a good shelter, and besides they were away all day cutting wood, so all they needed was a place to sleep at night. They had two little brown hens which kept them in eggs, and every week the son would go to the village and buy what food they needed.

One day the son said to his father, "Father, I believe I'd like to go out into the world and seek my fortune." This made the father very sad for he was getting old and he knew how lonely it would be without his son, but he did not want to stand in



his son's way, so he said, "Very well, you may go, but I shall miss you more than I can tell." The boy promised that he would not be gone long and that when he had earned his fortune he would come back and live with his father and take care of him in his old age.

One morning soon after that, the boy started off with his few belongings tied up in a pack thrown over his shoulder. He promised his father to come back soon, which made it easier to see him go. Now as time went on the old man found it much harder to get along alone. He had not realized before how much his son had helped him. Each week his scant savings grew smaller until one day when he counted his money he found that he had only five pennies left. "Only five pennies left," he thought, greatly alarmed, "I wonder what I can do with these five pennies to make them earn me some more." He

sat down on his door step with his head in his hands to think. Finally he decided to go down into the village and try his luck at whatever he could find to do. He put his pennies in his pocket and started for the village. The first shop he passed was the baker's and strange to say there stood the baker in the door of his shop looking anxiously up and down the street. The man knew that something must be wrong, so he said, "Good morning, baker, have you

The tailor sat cross-legged on his bench with his head in his hands.

no work to do today? You are usually such a busy man." "Indeed I have!" said the baker. "The king is giving a hunting party and has ordered me to bake him a hundred loaves of bread. I have my bread all ready to go into the oven and if I do say it myself it's the best I've ever made, but I haven't a single match to light the fire in my oven and worse than that I haven't a penny to buy any matches." "That is too bad," said the little old man, and then he thought of the five pennies in his pocket. He took one out and handed it to the baker. "Here," he said, "You may have one of my pennies, for surely you need it worse than I do." The baker's face brightened. "Oh, thank you!" said the baker. "Now I can bake my bread and deliver it to the king," and off he went to buy his matches. As the little old man walked on he passed the tailor shop and there, much to his surprise, sat the tailor cross-legged on his bench but with his head in his hands looking very much troubled. The little old man thought this was very strange for usually the tailor was such a busy man, stitching away or cutting out cloth with his big scissors. "Good morning, tailor," said the little old man. "You are usually so busy. Have you no work to do today?" "Oh, indeed I have!" said the tailor.

"The king is giving a hunting party and he has ordered me to make him a hundred scarlet hunting suits for his guests. I have them all finished except one suit and I haven't enough thread to finish that suit; neither have I any money with which to buy any more." "How much will the thread cost?" inquired the old man. "Perhaps I can help you." "Just a penny," said the tailor. "Here it is," said the little old man, "Surely you need it worse than I do, and still I have three pennies left." The tailor thanked the little old man most heartily and ran off to buy his thread.

The next shop the little old man came to was the hatter's. There sat the hatter with his hands folded, looking as though he had lost his last friend. "Good morning, hatter," said the little old man, "Have you nothing to do today?" "Indeed I have!" said the hatter. "The king is giving a hunting party and has ordered me to make him a hundred black velvet hats with long white plumes for his guests. I have the hats all made but I have lost my long curved needle that I use for sewing on the plumes and worse luck yet I have no money to buy me a new needle." "How much do you need," asked the little old man, thinking of the three pennies he had left in his pocket. "Just a penny," said the hatter. "Oh,

well!" said the little old man, "Take one of mine. You are in much greater need of it than I am." The hatter thanked him with all his heart and ran off to buy his needle.

As the little old man walked on he passed the shoemaker's shop, and there much to his surprise sat the shoemaker with not a tap of work to do. "Good morning, shoemaker," said the little old man. "Have you no work to do today?" "No work!" said the shoemaker, "Am I not always the busiest man on the street? And so I would be today, for the king has ordered me to make for him a hundred pair of hunting boots for the guests at his big hunting party. I have them all nicely finished except one pair and I haven't enough buckles to finish that pair; neither have I any money to buy more buckles." "That is too bad," said the little old man. "How much do you need?" "Just a penny," said the shoemaker. "Here it is," said the little old man, handing the shoemaker one of his pennies. "You need it far worse than I do." The shoemaker thanked him kindly and ran off as fast as he could go to buy his buckles.

By this time the little old man had come to the end of the street and just beyond lay a nice shady woods. Feeling rather tired he decided to find a shady place to rest. As he walked through

the woods he saw a group of men standing together talking quite earnestly. Some had saws, some hammers and some planes; so the old man knew they must be carpenters. "How strange they do not go to work," thought the little old man. So when he came to where they were standing he said to the head carpenter, "Good morning, carpenters! Have you nothing to do today?" "Indeed we have!" said the carpenter. "The king has sent us here to build him a hunting lodge where he may entertain

his guests after the hunt. We have everything to work with except a piece of chalk to mark our boards." "How much does it cost?" asked the little old man, thinking of the one lone penny in his pocket. "Just a penny," said the carpenter, "And none of us has a penny."

"I have just one left," said the little old man, "And you are welcome to it, for surely you need it far worse than I do." The carpenters all thanked him and off one ran to buy the chalk.

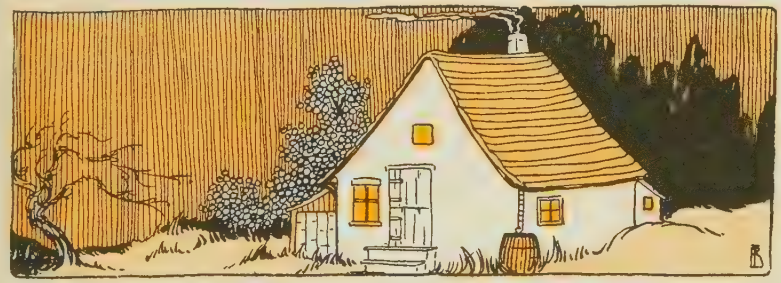
The little old man wandered on into the woods until he found a good place to rest. There he lay down and fell fast asleep. He was so tired that he slept all that day and all night and didn't waken the next day until the sun was high in the sky. "Dear me," thought the little old man, "This will never do. I must hurry home and get back to my work." He was rather hungry too for he hadn't eaten since yesterday. So he walked quickly back in the direction of the village. As he walked down the village street he heard some one calling, "Hoo, Hoo, Hoo, Hoo, little old man, come here!" There stood the shoemaker in the door of his shop beckoning to the old man to come in. When he went in the first thing that met his eye was a brand new pair of boots standing on the counter. "These are for you," said the shoemaker. "Sit right down here and try them on." So the little old man did and they fit him as though they had been made to his measure. The old man's face beamed for never in all of his life had he ever had such a fine pair of boots. "You see," said the shoemaker, "With that penny you gave me yesterday I was able to buy the buckles to finish up my boots for the king and he was so pleased with the boots that he paid me well for them. So I just made you this pair for a little present." The little old man went out thanking the shoemaker and stepping

as proudly as a peacock. He hadn't gone much farther when he heard some one else calling him. "Hoo, Hoo, Hoo, Hoo, little old man, come here!" There stood the hatter in the door of his shop holding a very fine new hat. "Here," said the hatter, "I've made this hat for you. Do you remember yesterday how you helped me to finish up my hats for the king by giving me a penny to buy me another needle? Well, the king was so pleased with them that he paid me extra for making them so I just thought I'd make you a hat too." The old man was so pleased that he could scarcely find words to thank the hatter. Off he stepped with his head high in the air, when he saw the tailor motioning to him to come in from the door of his shop. When the old man went in

the tailor handed him a bran-new suit of clothes. "I've made these for you," said the tailor. "Try them on and see how they fit." And so the old man did and they were just right for him in every way. "You see," said the tailor, "You helped me more than you will ever know by giving me that penny yesterday to buy my thread, so that I could finish up the suits for the king. The king was so pleased with them that he paid me much more than I asked for them and so I thought I would make you a suit too." The little old man could hardly believe it was he as he looked at himself in the tailor's mirror. Indeed, he had not realized before how shabby he must have looked in his old clothes. He thanked the tailor over and over again and started home whistling, something he hadn't done in many years. As he passed the bakery shop the baker ran out with two fresh loaves of bread. "Here, these are for you, little old man," said the baker. "You

helped me so yesterday by giving me that penny to buy some matches that I baked two extra loaves for you today." "Oh, thank you!" said the little old man, "I was hurrying home now to get my dinner and this bread will be just what I need." He walked a little bit faster now for the smell of the fresh bread made him all the more hungry. As he neared his house he stopped and looked, scarcely willing to believe his eyes. There were patches of new shingles on the roof, the door hung straight on its hinges and the stairs which were badly broken were nicely repaired with new boards. "Well," said the little old man half aloud, "I know who has been here—the carpenters!" Sure enough, there in a neat pile by the door were the shavings and chips all ready for the old man to light his fire, which he did at once. His little brown hens had laid him two fresh eggs and it wasn't long before he was sitting down to his dinner. "I should be perfectly happy if only my son were here with me," he was thinking when he heard a knock at the door. The old man ran and threw open the door. There stood his son. He threw his arms around his father and said, "Father, I've earned my fortune and have come back to stay with you. I have plenty to take care of us both and some to spare." The old man led

his son in and they both sat down to the table but they could scarcely find time to eat for having so much to tell each other of the things that had happened while the son had been gone. And the old man and his son lived happily ever after.



The Five Little Red Caps

Once upon a time there lived a man who was very, very poor. Indeed he was so poor that he had scarcely enough to eat, and his clothes hung in rags and tatters. He had but a few pennies left and one day he took them out to count them, wondering what he could do with them to earn some more money.

As he watched the children playing in the street an idea came to him. He thought to himself, "I'll just buy some little red caps and sell them to the children." And so he did, but he had only enough money to buy five little caps. "This will make me a good start," he thought, "And then with the money I get from these I can buy more, for surely all of the children will want one of these jaunty little red

caps." He put them in a sack, tied the sack up tight and throwing it over his shoulder started out to make his fortune.

He traveled on day after day but found no sale for the little red caps. At last he reached a country called Africa. Here it was dusty and hot. The sun beat down upon him and he felt weary from his long journey. He was looking for a place where he might lie down and rest. So he wandered out into the country. Very soon he came to a group of palm trees. There was plenty of shade there and it was cooler. Beautiful bright colored birds flew from tree to tree and the air seemed full of a queer kind of chatter. The man was too tired to notice this and threw himself down under a tree with his bag of caps beside him.

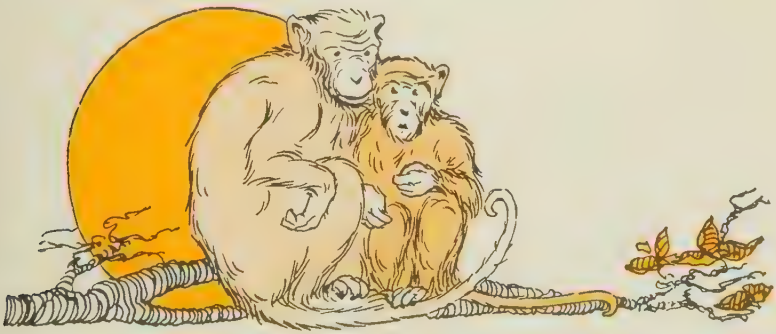
He was asleep in the twinkling of an eye. Now

the tree under which the man had fallen asleep was full of monkeys and they were quick to see what the man had done. Like all monkeys they were quite curious to see what was in the man's sack; so they came climbing down the tree, hand over hand, as only monkeys know how to do and peeped into the man's sack. They were delighted when they saw the little red caps and each took one out of the sack. They turned them round and round chattering among themselves and wondering of what use such

queer looking things might be; never in all their lives had they ever seen anything like them. Then one monkey discovered that the man had something on his head, which looked much like what they had found in the sack; so he quickly put his little red cap on his head. This pleased the other monkeys so that quick as a flash they put on their caps and went scampering and chattering up the tree.

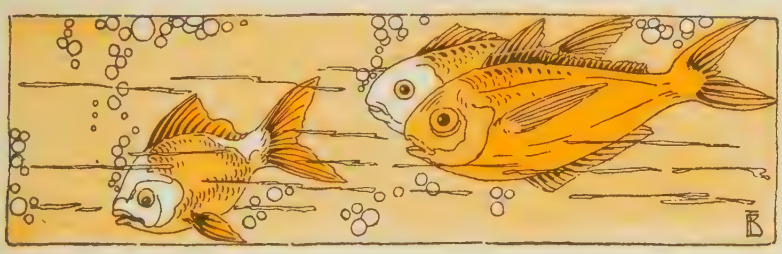
After a while the man awoke, rubbed his eyes and feeling quite rested decided to start on his way again. He thought the sack felt much lighter but reasoned to himself that it must be so because he had such a good rest. The farther he walked the more he wondered how his sack could be so much lighter. So just to satisfy himself that everything was all right he opened the sack. His caps were gone! What could have happened to them? Was there a hole in the sack? He examined it carefully. No, it was just as it had been before. He would go back to the tree and see if he could see anything of his precious caps. He looked about under the tree but no caps were to be seen. Then the chattering of the monkeys up in the tree attracted his attention. What was his surprise and dismay to find five little monkeys each wearing a red cap sitting up in the tree!

The man scratched his head and wondered how he could get back his caps. He knew that monkeys will some times do as people do. Then he thought of a plan. He took off his own ragged cap and whirled it in the air saying, "Whee! Whee!" Much to his great surprise each monkey did the same thing with his little red cap. Next he took his cap and threw it high in the air catching it with both hands. This trick pleased the monkeys so that they tried the same thing, chattering with glee at their smart tricks. Then the man threw his hat high in the air and let it fall to the ground, leaving it where it lay. The monkeys tried the same thing and as each little cap came fluttering to the ground the man picked it up quickly and popped it into the sack. Before the monkeys could realize what had happened he had thrown the sack over his shoulder and was well



on his way. The monkeys were very angry to think they had been so easily tricked and ran after the man chattering and scolding him but they were never able to catch him.

Even to this day monkeys love red caps but they have learned never to toss them in the air if they want to keep them.



The Five Chinese Boys

Away, way off in China there lived a very strange family, a mother and her five little boys. Now all of these little boys looked exactly alike, so much so that only their mother could tell one from the other. But stranger than this was the fact that each one of the little boys could do a different thing. The oldest little boy could take up all of the water in the ocean in his mouth at one time and then when he got ready could let it all go back again. The second little brother could make himself as tall as the tallest tree; the third little brother never minded how hot nor how cold it was; the fourth little brother could make himself as hard as a rock, and the fifth little brother could get out of any place that he was put.

These strange little boys and their mother lived in a little village beside the sea, where the people depended largely on the fish they could catch for

The five little boys lived in a village beside the sea.

food. However, everyone noticed that this family had more fish to eat than any other family in the village and so some of the people went to the mother of the five strange little boys and asked her what the reason was. She gladly told them that her oldest little boy could take up all of the water in the ocean in his mouth and hold it, which left the fish high and dry on the bottom of the sea. "Then," she said, "His other little brothers run out with baskets and pick up the fish. When he can hold the water in his mouth no longer he motions for them to come

and they run back with their fish before he lets the water out again." "May we send our children with yours for fish," they all asked, "For surely that is a much easier and quicker way of getting them than sitting all day in the hot sun fishing from a boat?" "Yes indeed," replied the mother, "But be sure and caution them to run back as soon as my little boy motions to them or else they will all be drowned." This they promised to do and the next morning all the children of the village went down to the ocean with the five little brothers. When the oldest little brother took the water in his mouth the children all ran in and began filling their baskets with fish. After a while the little boy motioned for the children to come back, but like all children they forgot and all of those children were drowned except the four little brothers, who heeded their brother's warning. As you may imagine all of the people of the village were very angry for they blamed this little boy for drowning their children. So he was taken before the highest judge in China. This judge sat on a golden throne and wore a purple robe embroidered in golden dragons. "What," said the judge in a very stern voice, "This little boy has drowned all of your children! It will be easy to punish him. We will throw him in the ocean too." "Very well," said

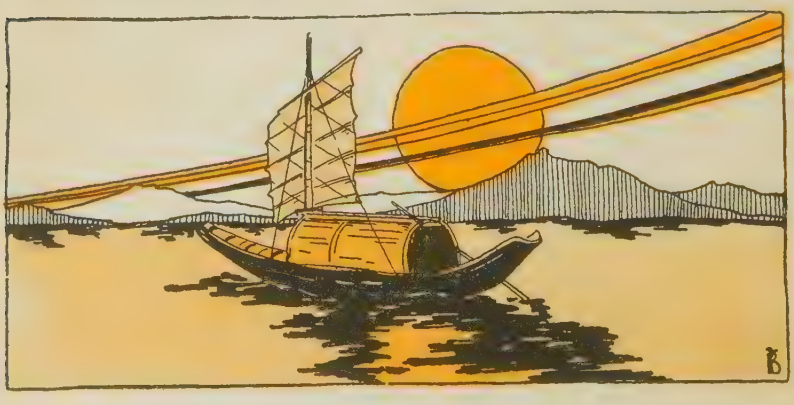
the little boy, "But please, Judge, may I go home and say good-bye to my mother?" "You may," said the Judge, "But come right back." Now instead of coming back himself he sent the second

little brother, who you remember could make himself as tall as the tallest tree. When they threw him in the ocean he just shot up so tall that the water never touched him. "What a strange child," said the judge. "If cold water doesn't hurt him, we'll try hot water." "Very well," said the little boy, "But please, Judge, may I go home and say good-bye to my mother?" "You may," said the Judge, "But come right back." Now instead of coming back himself he sent the third little brother, who you remember never minded how hot nor how cold it was. When they threw him in the hot water he never minded it at all but just swam around as though he was taking his daily swim in the ocean. "Well, well," said the Judge, "What a strange child this is. Cold nor hot water doesn't seem to hurt him. We'll have to chop off his head." "Very well," said the little boy, "But please, Judge, may I go home and say good-bye to my mother?" "You may," said the Judge, "But hurry right back." Instead of coming back himself the fourth little brother came, who you remember could make himself as hard as a rock. When they tried to chop off his head they couldn't do it at all for he made himself as hard as a rock. "What," said the Judge, "You can't chop off his head! This is surely the strangest child I have

ever seen. I will put a stop to this. Have this little boy baked in a huge cake and he will trouble us no longer." "Very well," said the little boy, "But please, Judge, may I go home and say good-bye to my mother?" The Judge had very little patience left for he was becoming very angry, so he said in

his sternest voice, "You may, but this is the last time. Hurry back!" Instead of coming himself the fifth little brother came, who you remember could get out of whatever place he was put. As you may imagine, it took all of the flour in the village to make this cake, and all of the tin in the village to make the pan and all of the iron in the village to make the oven. When all was ready they put the little boy in, shut up the oven door and went off to their homes shaking their heads and saying, "Surely this will be the end of this troublesome child."

Now when all was quiet and it was quite dark the little boy crept out of the cake, out of the oven and ran home as fast as he could go. That night the mother and the five strange little boys left China and no one has ever heard tell of them since.



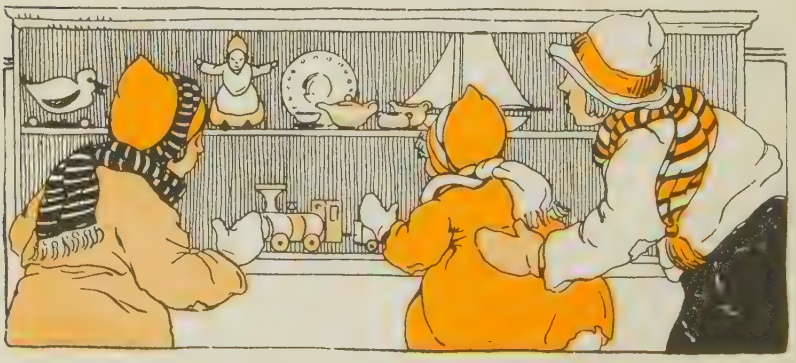
The Little Blue Dishes

(A Christmas Story)

Once upon a time way off in the forests of Germany there lived a wood cutter and his family. Beside the Father and Mother there was a big brother named "Hans" and a younger one named "Peterkin" and a dear little sister named "Gretchen," who was

just five years old. This was a very happy family in spite of the fact that they had barely what they needed to live on. The father worked hard cutting wood in the big forest all day and sometimes Hans and even Peterkin could earn a few pennies, but with all of that they had little to spare.

Christmas was coming and the children went down to the toy shop in the little village to look at the toys. The shop man was very kind and allowed them to come in and look at all of the toys. After they had looked at them all Peterkin said to Gretchen, "Well, Gretchen what do you like best of all the toys?" "This little set of blue dishes," said Gretchen, "They are the nicest I ever saw." Peterkin remembered now that she had gone back several times to look at them. There was a little fat teapot,



and a sugar bowl and cream pitcher and two little cups and saucers. Just the very thing to delight the heart of any little girl. Peterkin liked them too and how he wished down deep in his heart that he might buy them for her.

Christmas came and the children hung up their stockings, although their Mother had told them that they must not expect very much for Christmas. Perhaps just a few Christmas cookies which she had made that day. Hans ran out to play with the big boys, but Gretchen and Peterkin sat down before the fire to talk about the Christmas toys and especially about the blue dishes.

By and by Gretchen grew sleepy watching the fire and ran off to bed. Soon she was sound asleep. Peterkin went to his bank and shook it hard. There was just one penny in it. He took it out and away he ran to the toy store.

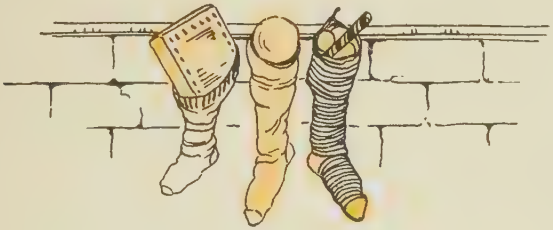
"What can I buy for a penny?" asked Peterkin all out of breath. "Not much," said the toy man. "You may have this pink candy heart with a picture on it for a penny." "But I want that set of blue dishes," said Peterkin. "Sorry," said the toy man, "But they cost ten cents." A lump came in Peterkin's throat but he managed to say, "All right I'll take the candy heart." He ran home with it and

slipped it in the toe of Gretchen's stocking, hoping she would not be too disappointed when she found it instead of the blue dishes Christmas morning.

Pretty soon Hans came in. He was cold and went straight to the fireplace where the stockings hung to warm his hands. He noticed the funny lump in the toe of Gretchen's stocking. Putting his hand in he drew out the candy heart. How pretty it looked and how good it smelled! Almost before he realized what he was doing he had eaten it. "Oh dear," he thought, "That was for Gretchen's Christmas. It would never do for her to wake up Christmas morning and find an empty stocking." He ran to his bank and being a bigger boy, he had been able to earn more money than Peterkin. Hans found exactly ten pennies. He slipped them into his pocket and hurried to the toy store. It was getting late and the toy man was about ready to close up. "What have you for ten pennies?" asked Hans. "Well I'm almost sold out," said the toy man, "About all I have left for ten cents is this set of little blue dishes." "I'll take them," said Hans and home he ran and slipped them into the toe of Gretchen's stocking. Then he went to bed.

The children got up early Christmas morning to look at their stockings. "Oh!" said Gretchen, "Look

at my stocking," and when she drew out the box of blue dishes she danced for joy, but Peterkin never could understand how his candy heart changed into a set of blue dishes. Can you?



He opened the door, and there to his great surprise was the big, round, red sun shining as bright as day.

The Magic Curtain

It was Christmas Eve and Santa Claus had all of the toys ready to start down to earthland. The dolls were all dressed, the sleds were all painted, and the candy and nuts were sacked ready for the children. In fact Santa's big pack stood by the door fairly bulging with every toy imaginable. Santa had been so busy that he had not thought of the time so he pulled on his big top coat, put on his cap and pulled on his great mittens. Throwing his big pack

over his shoulder he opened the door and there to his great surprise was the big, round, red sun shining as bright as day. "Well, well," chuckled Santa to himself, "This will never do. I can't start down to the children in broad daylight. No, no that would never do." So he went back into the house and sat down in front of the big grate fire, thinking to himself that he would just rest a bit and wait until it was time to go down to the children.

As Santa sat there stretched out before the fire in his big arm chair, he felt his head begin to nod. "I must not oversleep," he thought to himself, "Perhaps I had better hang up my magic curtain so that I will know when it is time to go."

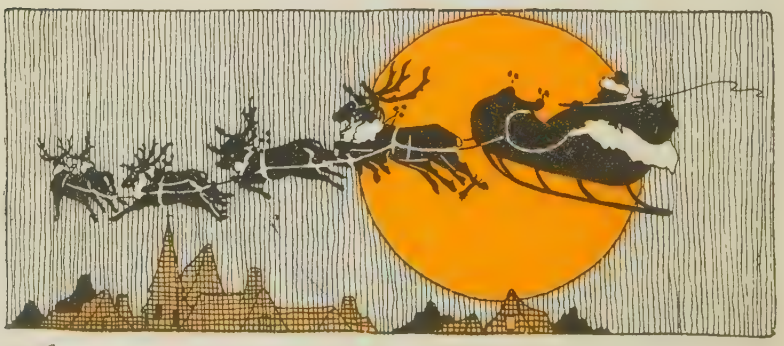
Santa hung up his magic curtain at the window telling it that when the sun went down and the stars came out it must drop down and awaken him should he chance to fall asleep before it was time to go.

Then Santa settled himself in his big arm chair, and, do you know that in less time than it takes to tell it he was sound asleep? The sun sank lower and lower and finally set like a big ball of fire in the west. Then one by one the little stars began to peep out and the magic curtain came down with a bang, but Santa Claus never heard it. He just slept and slept and slept. Now Santa Claus' little white kitten had been sitting curled up beside him and when the curtain came down with such a bang, it jumped up to see if Santa Claus had heard it. When it saw that Santa Claus was still sound asleep, it began to wonder what it could do to waken him for the kitten knew it would never do for Santa Claus to over-sleep on Christmas Eve.

Up on the mantel shelf over the fireplace stood a big round brass plate. The kitten spied it and with one jump was up on the mantel. It began rub-

bing against the plate until down it came with a crash, but Santa Claus never heard it. He just slept and slept.

When this failed to waken Santa Claus the kitten looked around, wondering what next it could do to awaken him. Then suddenly an idea came to the kitten. It jumped up in Santa's lap and with one little paw reached up and gave Santa's white beard a little pull. At this Santa Claus sat up with a start and rubbed his eyes. When he looked over and saw that the magic curtain had fallen Santa Claus jumped up and began pulling on his big coat and mittens. His little kitten kept rubbing against his big boots and indeed Santa Claus was not in too big a hurry to stoop down and give it a little pat for he knew if it hadn't been for that kitten; who knows? He might have been sleeping there yet.

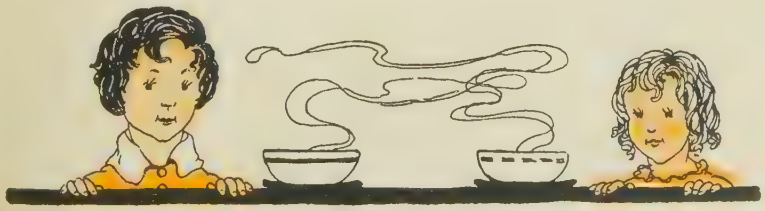


The Little Snow-Girl

Once upon a time there was a little girl and a little boy who lived in a house with their mother and father. These two children had names just like flowers, for the little girl was called Violet and the little boy Peony. One winter day the snow began to fall and it snowed and snowed and snowed. Violet and Peony stood and watched the snow awhile and then they said, "Oh! Mother dear, may we go and play in the snow?" The mother was sitting sewing by the window and she looked up and said, "Yes, I think so. Be sure to wrap up warmly." So the children put on their caps and coats and mittens, leggings and rubbers, and out they ran to

play in the snow. They had a fine time throwing snow at each other, snow balling and rolling up one big ball. Suddenly Peony said to Violet, "Oh! Violet wouldn't it be fun to make a snow-man?" "Oh! let's make a little snow-girl," said Violet. So they did make such a pretty little girl with a snow coat, snow bonnet with snow strings under her chin, snow leggings and rubbers, and then Violet said, "Oh! Peony, would it not be great fun if this little girl could play with us?" And do you know that just as Violet said these words, the little snow-girl opened her eyes, nodded her head, stepped off the snow and began to play. My! what a good time those children had. They played tag and ran races and called to their mother, "See, Mother what a nice little snow-girl we made." The mother would look up and nod her head and smile. She thought it was one of the neighbor children. So they played away all afternoon until the sun went down and the stars came out. It was then time for supper and father came home. "Well, children," he said, "Come in to supper. Have you been playing out all afternoon? How cold your hands are! Come in and get yourselves good and warm." "But Papa," said the children, "We can't go in without the little snow-girl." "Little snow-girl," said their Papa, "Nonsense! Who ever heard of such a child? Where is she?"

"Oh!" said Violet and Peony, "We did make one and she played with us all afternoon. And when you came home she ran way down behind the bushes in the garden." "Well," said Papa, "I'm going down and see." Down he walked and there was the little snow-girl. "Well, well," said Papa. He thought it was a neighbor child too. "Come in and get some hot soup, little girl, and then we will take you home." "But the little snow-girl hung back and shook her head for she knew what would happen if she went into the warm house. But the Papa said, "Come right in and get good and warm with us," and he took the little snow-girl right in with him. In the living room was a fine big fire blazing away in the grate. Violet stood on one side in front of the fire and Peony on the other. Papa put the little snow-girl right in the middle, between Violet and Peony. Then he went out to get a bowl of hot soup and when he came back there stood Violet on one side and Peony on the other and between them, there was a little heap of melted snow.



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The Easter Rabbit

Did you ever hear how it happened that the Easter Rabbit brings colored eggs at Easter time? This is the way the story goes.

Many, many years ago away off in Germany there lived a poor widow and her five children. Now in that country it is the custom to give presents at Easter time, just as we do in this country at Christmas. Each year this poor woman had managed somehow to have something for each child, so that they might not feel badly when Easter morning came. But one Easter came and the poor woman

was at her wits' end to know where she was going to get money to buy presents for her children. Then she thought of the eggs her few hens had laid. "I will color these beautiful eggs with the juice from the berries and herbs in the woods," she thought to herself, "And these will please the children as much as anything."

She hastily gathered the berries and herbs while the children were sleeping and from the juice of them colored the eggs even more beautifully than the woman had imagined. The brown speckled eggs were turned to a bright red, and the pure white eggs came out a soft green and light pink. "How pleased the children will be," thought the woman. Then she wondered how she could hide them so that they might be a surprise for the children. "I'll hide them in the woods," thought the woman, "Then the children can take their baskets and go out and hunt for them." This she did, hiding two or three together in little grass nests which she made at the foot of trees or behind old stumps. The next morning the children were awake bright and early and ran downstairs to find their Easter gifts. "Where are they mother?" the children cried.

"Take your baskets first and go out into the woods," said the mother, "And see what you can find."

The children obeyed and ran off to the woods. It was a lovely spring morning and they ran here and there picking the spring flowers. Suddenly one of the children cried out, "Come see what I've found." All the children ran to see what it could be; there lay three beautifully colored eggs in a little grass nest at the foot of an old tree. The children danced with joy. "This must be a wood-fairy's nest," said one of the children. "What beautiful colors!" exclaimed another, "Let us touch them to

see if they are real." They looked all about them to see if anyone was near, then they heard the crackle of a twig in a pile of brush and out jumped a little white rabbit. "This must be the rabbit's nest," said one of the children, "She has left these beautiful eggs for us for an Easter present."

By this time some of the other children had found other nests and were busy putting the eggs in their baskets. When they had hunted until they could find no more, they hurried home to show their mother. "Look what the white rabbit in the woods

has left for us," they cried. They gathered around their mother and all talked at once in their eagerness to tell her about it.

"These will have to be your Easter gifts this year," said the mother. But the children were so delighted they declared it was the nicest Easter they had ever had. Ever after that there were nests of colored eggs for those children and many others besides.

The Shoe-maker and the Elves

Once upon a time there lived a poor shoe-maker and his wife. Indeed they were so poor that one morning when he went to his bench to work, he found that he had only leather enough left to make one pair of shoes and no money with which to buy more leather. He cut out the shoes and laid them on his bench expecting to finish them the next morning.

That night while the shoe-maker and his wife were sound asleep a very strange thing happened; two little elves came dancing in the shoe-maker's window. They danced about on the shoe-maker's work bench when all of a sudden they spied the pieces of leather which the shoe-maker had cut out for a pair of shoes. In a twinkling they stopped their dancing, sat down on the bench and began sewing and stitching and pegging until in less time than it takes to tell it there stood two shoes side by side on the shoe-maker's bench.

As soon as they had finished they danced once around the pair of shoes and then disappeared out of the window.

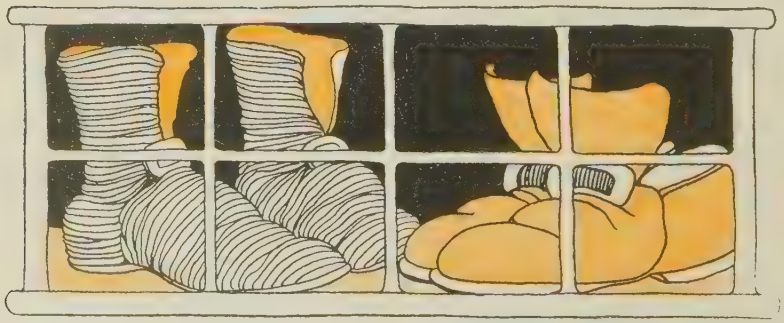
They stopped their dancing, sat down on the bench and began sewing, stitching and pegging.

The next morning when the shoe-maker and his wife got up, what was their surprise to find the shoes all neatly made, setting on the bench! "Who has been here and done this?" they asked of one another. They looked around the room but could find nothing disturbed nor any trace of whom the person might be. The shoe-maker put the shoes in his show window and it wasn't long until a customer came in and bought them. They were so well made he gladly paid the shoe-maker a good price for them, enough so that he had plenty of money to buy leather for

two more pairs of shoes. He cut these out and laid them on his bench expecting to make them into shoes the next day.

That night after the shoe-maker and his wife had gone to bed, in danced the two little elves just as they had done the night before. After dancing around the table they spied the new leather and quick as a flash they sat down and began to sew. Soon there stood on the bench two shining pairs of shoes all neatly made and ready for the shoe-maker to sell. They danced once around the shoes and then disappeared out of the window as they had done the night before.

When the shoe-maker and his wife awoke, they ran straight to the bench to see if any more good fortune had befallen them. What was their delight to find instead of the pieces of leather two pairs of



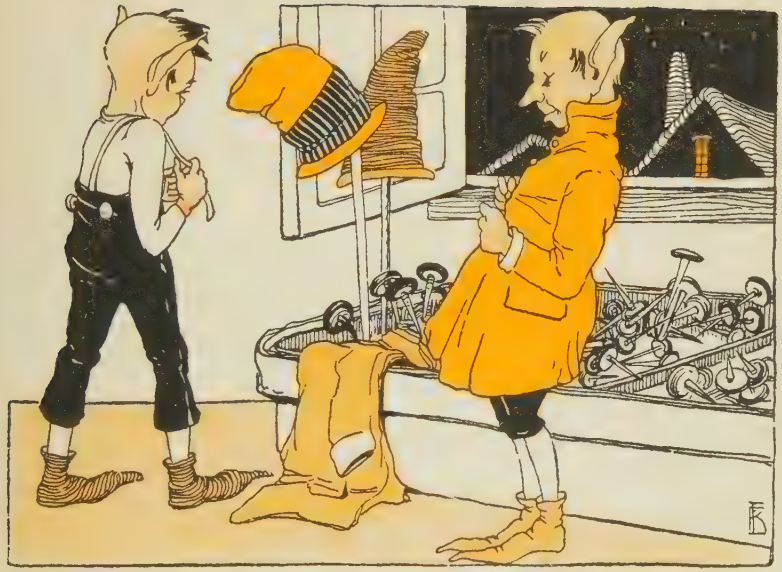
shoes all neatly made and ready for the shoe-maker to sell! He put these in his window and it wasn't long before two customers came in and because the shoes were so neatly made they paid him well for the shoes, thus enabling the shoe-maker to buy enough leather for four more pairs of shoes. These he cut out and left as before on his work bench. That night the same thing happened and in the morning there stood the shoes all neatly made upon the bench. These the shoe-maker sold and with the money bought more leather. Each night the same

thing happened. The shoes that were cut out the day before were all neatly made and left on the bench in the morning.

The shoe-maker and his wife talked and wondered about it a great deal. They were now no longer poor and longed to do something in return for all the kindness which they had received. One day the shoe-maker's wife said, "Let us, instead of going to bed tonight, sit up and hide ourselves in the room. Then we will find out who has been helping us and we may be able to do something for them in return." The shoe-maker thought this a fine idea and that night he and his wife hid themselves in the room and watched what happened.

They could scarcely believe their eyes when they saw the two little elves dance in and do their work, but they kept very still, not wishing to frighten them away before they could repay them for their kindness.

After the little elves had gone they talked about what they could do to repay them for all they had done for them. "They wore no suits," said the shoe-maker. "So they didn't," said the wife, "Perhaps I could make them each a little suit of clothes." "And I'll make them each a little pair of pointed shoes," said the shoe-maker.



They went straight to work in order to have them ready to leave on the shoe-maker's bench that night. Instead of leaving the pieces of leather on the bench that night as they had always done, they left the little suits and the two little pairs of pointed shoes. The shoe-maker and his wife then hid themselves in the room to see what would happen.

Sure enough in danced the two little elves just as they had done before. They danced about the table, when suddenly they spied the little suits and shoes. They began pulling on the coats and

trousers in great glee and the shoe-maker and his wife thought they heard them give a little chuckle when they put on the shoes and little pointed caps.

When they had all of their new clothes on they danced round and round the table in great glee. Then away they went out of the window and the shoe-maker and his wife never saw them again. But they were no longer poor and in need of help, for now the shoe-maker had plenty of money to buy leather and every day customers came and bought his shoes, so he and his wife lived happily ever after.

Hans and the North Wind

Away up in the far north land there lived a boy whose name was Hans. Hans lived in a little tiny house with his grandmother. One day his grand-

mother said to him, "Hans, you take this pan and go out into the storehouse and bring me in a pan of flour for my bread." He took the pan and went to the storehouse. There was only a little flour left in the barrel and Hans had to scrape the bottom in order to fill the pan. As he came out of the storehouse the north wind rushed past him with a great gust and scattered the flour everywhere. Indeed there wasn't even a handful left in the pan. "This will not do," thought Hans, "Grandmother needs that flour for her bread. I'll just go straight to the place where the North wind lives and tell him about it. Perhaps he can give me back the flour." So Hans started off. He traveled all that day and finally came to the place where the North Wind lived. It was a queer looking house all made of ice and snow. Great icicles hung over the doorway, but Hans walked right in and went straight to the North Wind and told him what had happened to the flour. "Ho! Ho!" laughed the North Wind after he had heard Hans' story. "Why I can't give you back your flour, it is scattered everywhere by now," said the North Wind. "But I can give you a magic table cloth. When you spread it out before you and say the magic words, 'Little table dish up,' there before you will be everything you'll want to eat and drink."

"Oh!" cried Hans, "That would be much better than having the flour. I'll be very glad to have the magic table cloth." Hans thanked the North Wind most heartily, put the table cloth under his arm, and started back to his grandmother's house. Hans found that he could not get back that night so he decided to stay all night at a little inn by the roadside. Feeling rather hungry he thought he would try his magic table cloth. He spread it out before him, said the magic words, "Little table dish up," and there before him was everything you could think of to eat and drink. Hans thought this was

very fine and being hungry from his long trip ate a good meal.

The old man who kept the inn had watched Hans and his magic table cloth and made up his mind to get that table cloth when Hans was fast asleep. That night after everyone was asleep the old inn-keeper crept up into Hans' room and took the magic table cloth, leaving just an ordinary one in its place.

The next morning Hans picked up his table cloth and hurried off. When he got to his grandmother's house he told her all about where he had been and about his magic table cloth. "I dare say," said grandmother, "But seeing is believing." So Hans spread out the table cloth, said the magic words, but not a crumb appeared. Hans thought this was very strange and hurried back to tell the North Wind about it. "I'm sorry," said the North Wind, "But I can't give you back your flour and I haven't another magic table cloth, but I can give you a magic goat. When you say the words, 'Goat, goat make money,' he will give you gold money." "That is far better than either the flour or the table cloth," said Hans. He thanked the North Wind with all his heart and started home leading his goat.

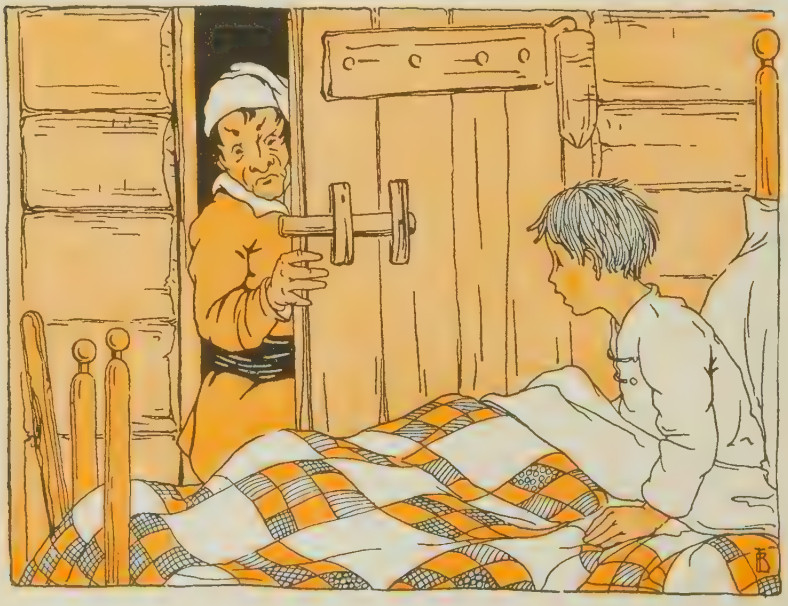
Again he stayed all night at the same little inn.

That night thinking to prove the worth of his goat, Hans said, "Goat, goat, make money," and the goat filled Hans' hands with gold money. All who saw this thought it was a wonderful goat, especially the old inn-keeper who said to himself, "I shall have that goat tonight when Hans is fast asleep."

That night when he was sure Hans was asleep, he crept up into his room and left a goat much like Hans' magic goat and led the magic goat away.

The next morning Hans got up very early and started home leading his goat. When he neared his

grandmother's house he called out, "Oh! Grandmother come and see my magic goat." Then he told his grandmother what had happened. She shook her head and said, "I dare say, Hans, but seeing is believing." So Hans said, "Goat, goat, make money," and not a piece of gold appeared. By this time he had begun to suspect what was wrong. He hurried off again to tell the North Wind. "I haven't another magic goat but I can give you this stick. When you say the words, 'Stick beat,' it will lay on and beat. When you want it to stop, say, 'Stick stop beating,' and it will fall to the ground."



"I shall be glad of that," said Hans, and he hurried off with the stick. That night he stayed all night at the same little inn. The old inn-keeper watched to see what magic thing Hans had with him this time. When he saw the stick he determined to get that when Hans was fast asleep. Hans stood the stick in the corner of the room and went to bed, but instead of going to sleep he lay very still to see what would happen. Just as Hans had thought, when everything in the house was quiet the old inn-keeper crept up into Hans' room to get the stick. As soon as he had his hand on the stick, Hans sat up in bed and called out "Stick beat." The stick lay on the inn-keeper and gave him a sound beating. When the old man could stand no more, he called out, "If you'll only make your stick stop beating I'll give you back your magic table cloth and your magic goat." "Oh! Ho!" said Hans, "So it was you who took my magic things? Run and get them and I'll make my stick stop beating you."

The old man hurried off and brought back the table cloth and the goat. Then Hans said, "Stick stop beating," and the stick fell to the floor while the old man hobbled off with a very sore back.

As soon as it was light Hans set off with his magic things for his grandmother's house. He was

not long on the way and when he got there he threw open the gate and called, "Oh, grandmother, grandmother. See! I have all of my magic things back again." "I dare say," said grandmother, "But seeing is believing."

So Hans spread out the table cloth and said the magic words, "Little table dish up," and there before them was everything one could wish for to eat and drink. Hans and his grandmother sat down and ate all that they wanted and still there was plenty. Then Hans said to the goat, "Goat, goat, make money." The goat gave them so much gold that Hans and his grandmother filled their pockets and still there was gold to spare.

"What about the stick, Hans?" asked Grandmother. Then Hans told her all about what hap-

pened. She said, "Well Hans, let us stand the stick just beside our door so it will always be near to help us."

Hans and his grandmother felt they had more than their rights for the flour they had lost.

The Straw Ox

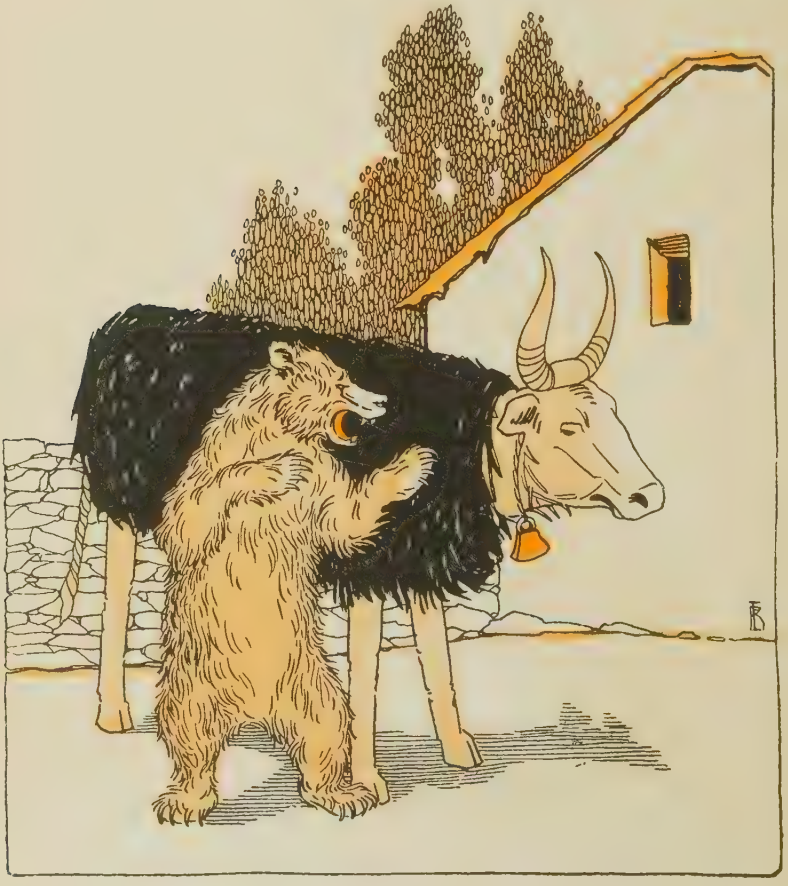
(A Russian Folk Tale)

A long, long time ago, there lived an old woman and an old man. They were very very poor indeed, in spite of the fact that they had no children to keep.

Neither had they any animals in their barn. Every day the old man worked in the field and the old woman spun flax. One day the old woman said to the old man, "Daddy make me a straw ox and smear it with tar, then we will have something to keep in our little barn." "What good would a straw ox smeared with tar be to us?" asked the old man. "Just wait and see," said the old woman. So to please the old woman the old man made her a straw ox and smeared it with tar. This greatly pleased the old woman and the next morning she drove the ox into the field.

"Eat, eat, and grow fat my little ox," she said, "While I sit by and spin." After a while the old woman grew tired of spinning and she fell fast asleep. Soon a bear came out of the woods and seeing the straw ox he came closer. "Who are you?" asked the bear, "Speak and tell me." "I'm the straw ox that's smeared with tar, I am. Touch my coat and see for yourself." The bear put out his paw to feel the ox and he stuck fast to the tar. He pulled and pulled but the harder he pulled the tighter he stuck. Then the ox dragged the bear home and waited for the old woman to come back. Soon the old woman came running home to see what had happened to her ox.

When the old woman saw the bear, she called to the old man, "Come quick and see what the ox has brought us." The old man clapped his hands for joy and threw the bear in the cellar.



The next morning the old woman drove the ox into the field. "Eat, eat, and grow fat my little ox," she said, "While I sit by and spin." After a while the old woman fell asleep. Soon a wolf came out of the woods. He ran up to see the ox and said, "Who are you? Speak and tell me." "I'm the straw ox that's smeared with tar I am. Touch my coat and see for yourself." The wolf put out his paw to touch the ox and he stuck fast. He pulled and pulled but could not get away. Then the ox dragged the wolf home.

By and by the old woman came running home looking for her ox. When she saw the wolf, she

called to the old man, "Come quick and see what the ox has brought us today." The old man chuckled with joy and threw the wolf in the cellar.

The next day the old woman took the straw ox out to graze and he caught a fox in the same way. This the old man threw in the cellar and the next day the ox brought home a hare. Then the old man sat down by the cellar door and began to sharpen his great knife. "Why do you sharpen your knife,

daddy?" asked the bear. "I'm going to have your skin for a warm jacket for winter and the old woman wants a coat," replied the old man. "Please do not take away my skin, daddy," said the bear. "Let me go and I will bring you a fine pot of honey."

"That would not be so bad," said the old man, "See that you do," and he let the bear go. Then he sat down again and began to sharpen his knife. "Daddy, why do you sharpen your knife?" asked the wolf. "I want your skin for a fur collar for winter," replied the old man. "Do not take my skin," said the wolf, "Let me go and I will bring you a flock of sheep." "That would not be so bad," said the old man, "See that you do," and he let the wolf go.

He sat down to sharpen his knife when the fox asked him the same question. "I am going to take your skin for a fur cap," replied the old man. Then the fox promised him a flock of geese if he would only let him go. Thinking this a fair exchange the old man let the fox go. The hare seeing how well the others had done offered the old man some nice turnips if he would let him go. The old man thought that perhaps the turnips would be better than a pair of mittens which he could make out of the hare's skin, so he let the hare go.

The next morning the old woman said, "Some one is at our door, go and see who it may be." The old man threw the door open. There stood the bear with a pot of honey, the wolf with the flock of sheep, the fox with the flock of geese, and the hare with a basket of turnips.

Now the old man and old woman have all they need and the straw ox stands in the barn.

Hans and the Four Giants

Hans was the son of a poor wood cutter. Every day he went out to the forest to help his father cut wood and, do you know, before long Hans was as good a wood-cutter as his father. One day he said to his father, "You say that I am as good a wood-cutter as you are?" "Yes," said the father. "Well," said Hans, who was an ambitious boy, "I do not get ahead very fast just cutting wood every day. I would like to go down to the village and try my hand at something else." "Very well," said the father, and so Hans left and journeyed down to the village. He had always been attracted to the blacksmith shop. The blacksmith himself was such a jovial good fellow, and his fire was always blazing up so brightly as Hans passed by. Something told Hans to go to the blacksmith and ask him for work, and so he did.

It was Hans' good fortune that the blacksmith needed a helper and so Hans helped the blacksmith for a long time. And, do you know, it wasn't long before Hans was as good a blacksmith as the blacksmith himself. The blacksmith grew very fond of

One day the Princess came driving up to the blacksmith shop.

him and said many nice things about his work. One day the princess came driving up to the blacksmith shop with her two milk white ponies and asked to have them shod. It was Hans who put their shoes on and, as he worked, he could not help but marvel at the princess' beauty. After she had gone, Hans asked the blacksmith more about the Princess. He told him how she lived with her father, the king, in a beautiful palace just outside of the village and how kind and good she was and how all the people loved her.

Each day after that, as he worked, Hans thought of the beautiful princess and of how lovely it would be to work up there at the palace. The more Hans thought of it the more he was determined to try. So he told the blacksmith about it. He wished him well and Hans started off.

Hans found the palace and its beauty was far greater than he had imagined. Hans asked the king if by any chance he needed a good wood cutter at the palace. "No," said the king, "We are not in need of a wood cutter." "Well," said Hans, "Are you in need of a good blacksmith? For if I do say it myself I am as good a blacksmith as the blacksmith down in the village." "No," said the king, "We are not in need of a blacksmith." Hans was about to

turn away when the king called him back. "I am looking for a young man who will find the Princess' string of pearls which lie at the bottom of the North Sea. Whoever brings this string of pearls back to me in time for the Princess' birthday may marry the Princess and have half of my kingdom."

Hans begged the king to let him try, and so he started off with his heart set on finding the pearls and winning the Princess.

As Hans journeyed along the road, something passed by him with the roar of a train. Hans

looked up quickly and there he saw a great giant. "Good day," said Hans. "Good day," said the giant, "Who are you?" "Oh," said Hans, "I am just Hans the blacksmith journeying up to the North Sea to find a string of pearls for the king's daughter." "Who are you?" asked Hans. "I'm the Giant with the longest legs in the world. I am going your way, so if you like just jump in my pocket and I'll take you faster than the fastest train." Hans thought this a fine idea and when the giant stooped down Hans jumped in his pocket and away they went. As they journeyed along, they passed another

giant who was sitting by the road-side sound asleep. The hot sun was shining in his eyes and Hans thought this too bad, so he called out to the giant to stop that he might fix a branch of a tree to keep the sun out of the giant's eyes. As Hans was fixing the branch the giant woke up and rubbing his eyes called out, "Well, well, who are you?" "Oh," said Hans, "I'm just Hans the blacksmith. I'm journeying up to the North Sea to find a string of pearls for the king's daughter. As I passed by and saw the sun shining in your eyes I thought I could fix the branch of this tree so it would shield your eyes." "That was very kind of you," said the giant, "I am the giant that when I put on these great glasses I can see any place in the world. I am going in your direction, I'll just journey along with you." So Hans and the two giants journeyed along together. Before they had gone very far they met another giant. A gust of wind had just blown this giant's hat off and Hans called to the giant that he would gladly get it for him, but before Hans could jump down out of the first giant's pocket, the other giant had stretched out his great arm and placed it back on his head. "Who are you?" cried Hans, "That you can reach as far as that?" "Oh!" replied the giant, laughing, "I am the giant with the longest

arms in the world. When I stretch out my arms so that my finger tips touch, I can reach around the world." "Who are you?" asked the giant. "Oh," said Hans, "I am just Hans the blacksmith, on my way to the North Sea to find a string of pearls for the king's daughter." "I am going that way myself," said the giant. So Hans and the three giants journeyed along together.

It wasn't long before they met another giant who was just walking along the road, minding his own business. "Hello!" called Hans as they passed.

When the giant heard Hans' voice, he reached up and lifted two great pieces of cotton out of his ears, explaining that, when he took these pieces of cotton out of his ears, he could hear everything that was going on in the world. "Indeed," said Hans. "I am Hans the blacksmith going up to the North Sea to find a string of pearls for the king's daughter. If you like you may journey along with us." "I

wouldn't mind," said the giant, so Hans and the four giants journeyed along together.

Traveling the way giants travel, soon brought them to the banks of the North Sea. There stood a boat tied to the shore, which Hans suggested they might use to help them find the string of pearls as the king had said they lay at the bottom of the sea.

The giants thought this a very good idea, and Hans and the four giants climbed in and rowed out from the shore. The water looked dark and very

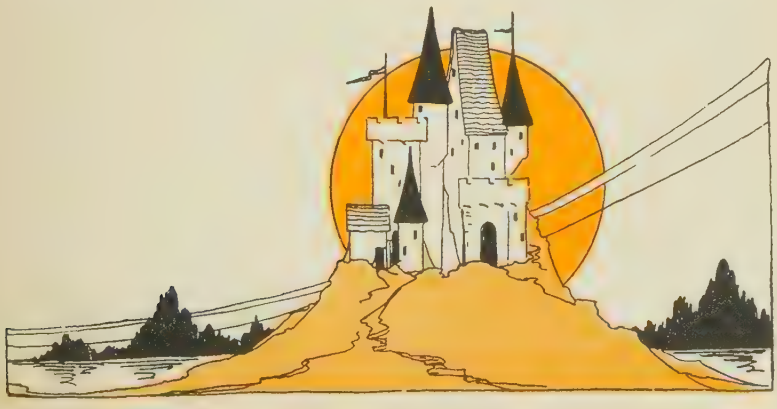
deep and Hans wondered how they ever would see a string of pearls if they lay at the bottom of the sea.

"That is very easy," said the giant who had the great glasses. "I will just put on my glasses and if they lie at the bottom of this water I can see them." He put the glasses on and looked first on one side of the boat and then the other and then he called out in his great voice. "Here they lie Hans, just beside the boat and they are very beautiful." Hans hurried over beside the giant and stuck his arm down in the water to reach them, but alas his arm was much too short. "Let me try," said the giant, who had the longest arm in the world. He put his great arm down in the water and soon brought up the string of pearls. "Oh!" cried Hans, "How beautiful! Now if I can only get back to the palace in time to give these to the Princess for her birthday, I shall win the Princess and half the kingdom." "When is the Princess' birthday?" asked the giant who wore the great pieces of cotton in his ears. "I don't know," said Hans. "Indeed I started off in such a hurry that I didn't think to ask the king. Perhaps we may be too late after all our trouble." "I can soon find out," said the giant, taking the pieces of cotton out of his ears. After listening a few minutes, he turned to Hans and said, "No Hans you are not too late.

The Princess' birthday is tomorrow and great preparations are being made for it may be the Princess' wedding day."

"Yes," said Hans, "But how can I ever get back over all this long journey by tomorrow?" "Don't worry about that," laughed the giant with the longest legs in the world. "I will take you back the same way I brought you, in my pocket." Hans fairly shouted for glee. "Let us start at once then so that we may not be too late."

Away Hans and the four giants traveled, faster than any train. In less time than it takes to tell it, they were back at the castle. Hans hurried up to the king and with a low bow handed him the string of pearls. This pleased the king greatly and he called the Princess that Hans might claim his reward.



The birthday feast proved to be a wedding feast as well, for Hans married the Princess and received half of the kingdom. Hans did not forget his friends, the four giants, who had a place of honor at the wedding feast, and settled down with Hans and the Princess to live happily ever after.

Why the Bear Has a Stumpy Tail

Grey Legs, the fox was one of the cleverest fellows in the great woods. He liked nothing better than to out-wit old Bruin, the bear. One day old Bruin met Grey Legs with a string of fish he had stolen. Thinking to get some fish for himself, old Bruin said, "Tell me, my good fellow, how do you set about to catch fish?"

"Oh that would be an easy thing for you to learn," answered old Grey Legs, chuckling to him-

self. "Do just as I tell you and you will have no trouble in catching all the fish you want."

Old Bruin was all ears to hear what Grey Legs had to tell him.

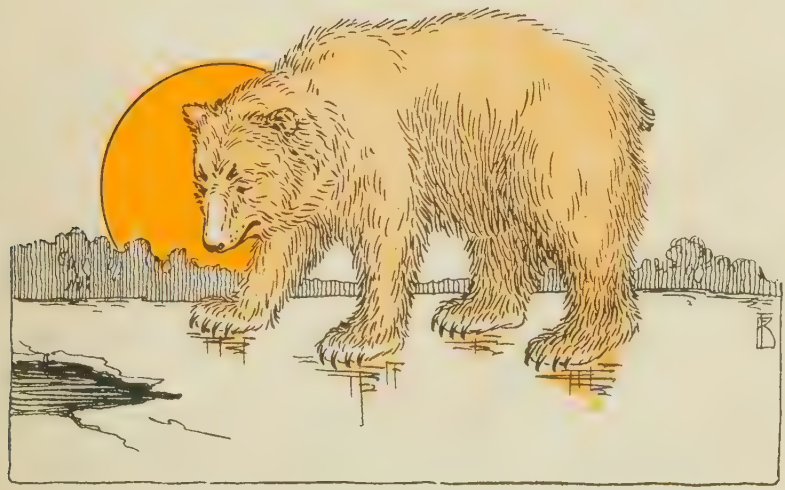
"Go upon the ice in the river, make a hole in it and stick your tail down into the water," said Grey Legs. "Hold it there as long as you can and never mind if it smarts you a little; that's when the fish

are biting. The longer you hold it there, the more fish you'll have. Then all of a sudden give a strong pull out with a cross pull sideways."

Old Bruin hurried off to try his luck while Grey Legs went his way chuckling to himself.

He held his tail a long, long time in the water until it was frozen fast. Then he gave a strong pull out with a cross pull sideways and it snapped off short.

That's why every bear goes about even to this day with a stumpy tail.



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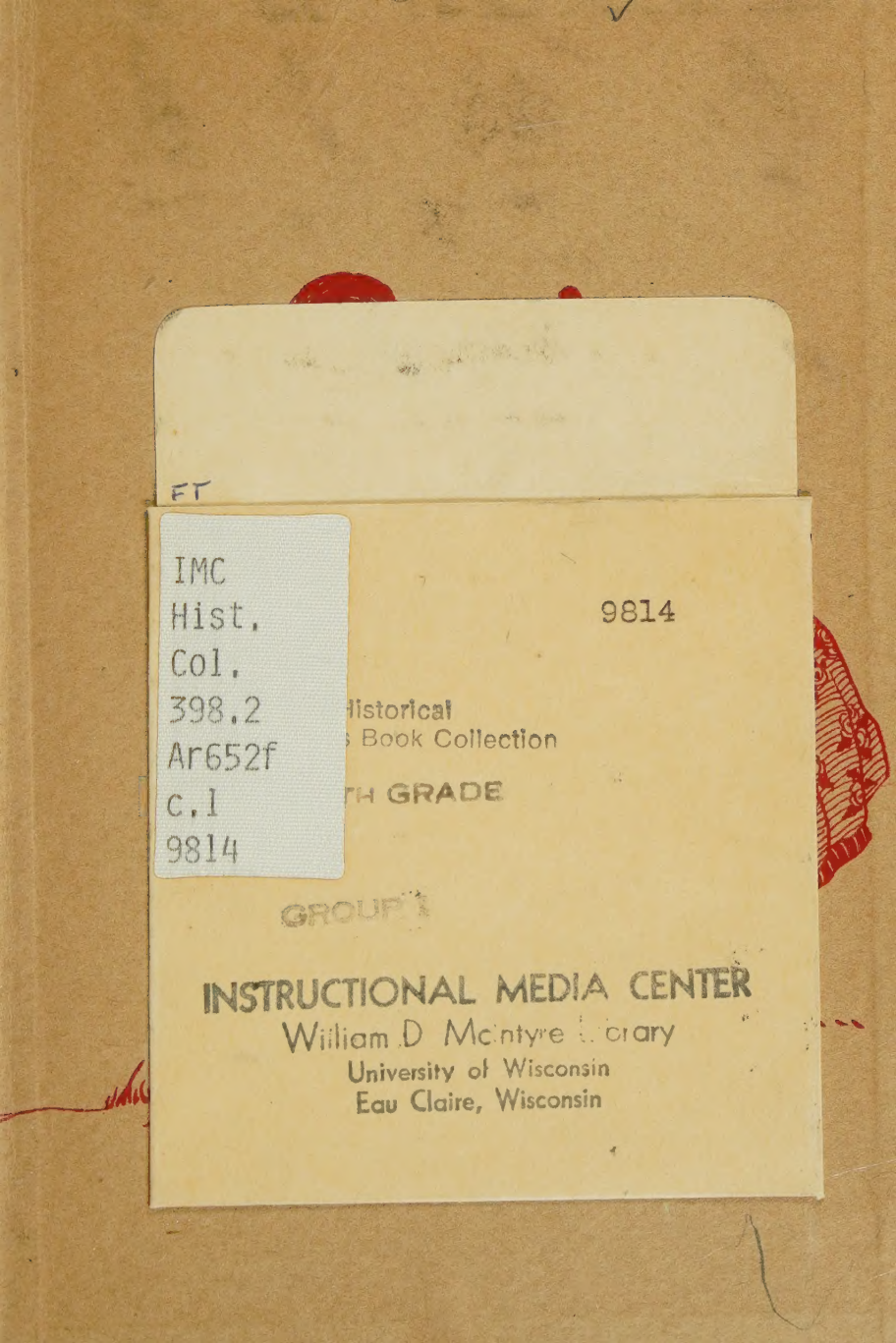
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